

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRIDGE 01747 152100Z

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1427

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BRIDGETOWN 1747

EO 11652: NA

TAGS: MARR, AC

SUBJECT: ANTIGUA INCREASES INTEREST IN NAVAL FACILITY
LEASE

ANTIGUA SENATOR HUGH MARSHALL AND DEPUTY PREMIER LESTER BIRD TELEPHONED ME LAST EVENING REGARDING A RESPONSE TO ANTIGUA'S REQUEST TO RENEGOTIATE THE LEASE ON THE NAVY FACILITY. HE (MARSHALL) SAID, WITH BIRD LISTENING, THAT COMPETITION IS REPORTEDLY BEING PUT FORTH BY SOME OTHER CARIBBEAN ISLAND FOR THE FACILITY. HE REITERATED THEIR DESIRE TO HAVE IT, AND WISH TO GET STARTED EARLY, AND ASKED IF HE SHOULD CONTACT THE NAVY SECRETARY DIRECTLY. I TOLD HIM THAT WE ARE NOT IN POSITION TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS YET, FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS, BUT WOULD, OF COURSE, KEEP IN TOUCH. MY RECOMMENDATION TO HIM WAS THAT THE GOA SIMPLY KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE EMBASSY HERE, AND TO INSURE THAT THEIR UK COUNTERPARTS ARE INFORMED OF THEIR INTENTIONS TO RE-NEGOTIATE. (FYI: FIRST TIME WE'VE HEARD OF ANY ISLAND COMPETING FOR A NAVFAC, ALTHOUGH OTHERS (ST. LUCIA AND GRENADA) HAVE SIGNIFIED INTEREST.)
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